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ABSTRACT

This study examines the education of immigrant preschool children in Sweden, focusing on native language instruction, Swedish instruction, cultural awareness, parent participation, and teacher preparation for working with immigrant students. Data collection involved observation of preschool classes and interviews with teachers at one preschool and with immigrant parents. Results indicate that immigrant students did not receive education in their native languages within the preschool program. This was attributed to lack of funds. Teachers reported wanting to be able to offer education in students' native languages but not being able to because of financial limitations. The preschool focused on educating students in Swedish. The school respected and worked with immigrant students' cultural and religious differences. Parents, including immigrant parents, were encouraged to play an active role in the preschool, and immigrant parents were told to communicate with their children in their native languages. Professional interpreters were available to help immigrant parents who were unable to converse in Swedish. While teachers had education for teaching at the preschool level, they did not receive special training for dealing with immigrant children. Investigation framework and study materials are appended. (Contains 27 references.) (SM)

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EDUCATION OF IMMIGRANT CHILDREN AT THE PRE-SCHOOL LEVEL IN SWEDEN en empirical study of how the education of immigrant children is conducted in practice

Evguenia Pavlovskaia

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ABSTRACT

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The Background: Immigrant children's education is a very complex phenomenon that requires a special approach from pedagogues and country authorities. It cannot be neglected, otherwise the future consequences can be frustrating. According to the Swedish governmental policy, immigrant children should have the same rights for education as Swedish pupils. They should also have the right to preserve and cultivate their home culture. To achieve the latter, immigrant children should know their mother-tongue at a rather high level. The knowledge of the mother-tongue is also important for mastering Swedish, as the learning of these two languages is closely connected.

The Purpose: This work concentrates on how the education of immigrant children at the pre-school is conducted in reality. Its main purpose is to investigate how such a complicated notion as immigrant children's education is carried out in practice and to discuss it.

The Research Method: The formulation of the purpose determined the selection of the method of the investigation. To collect the data and analyse their quality, the qualitative research method was implemented.

The Results: The research has shown that in spite of the indispensable role the mother-tongue plays for immigrant children, its training is not included on the programme of the pre-school where the study has been conducted. The reason for that is seen in the shortage of the communal money resources. The absence of the mother-tongue training at this level can become a serious hindrance for the overall development of immigrant children, and in many cases it is already the case, as the author of this work has seen it. Thus the hope has been expressed in the paper that in the future the commune will take responses for the situation around immigrant children's education and include the teaching of the mother-tongue into the pre-school schedules.

Key Words: Immigrant children's education, pre-school, mother-tongue, learning Swedish, bilingualism

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INTRODUCTION

During the last decades a lot has changed in the fundamentals of the Swedish society. One of the most considerable changes was that Sweden gained the status of a multicultural country. Of course immigration had occurred earlier. Over the course of centuries Germans, Scots and other nationalities came to Sweden, but then it was not on such a large scale. In modern times, however, immigration really started with the end of the Second World War, when almost 200000 people fled to Sweden. During the post-war period, that was marked by a rapid industrial development, the so-called labour-market immigration took place. It brought a huge amount of foreigners with different national backgrounds to Sweden, whose total number at the beginning of the 1970-ies was around 600 000 (Info about Sweden, 1995). Besides that, political crises in various countries caused the waves of refugee immigration to Sweden. Here I can mention large ethnic groups from ex-Yugoslavia, Iran, Iraq, Somalia and other places, who had to ask for the political asylum in Sweden.

Such an intensive flood of immigration into the country aroused a range of specific questions that needed to be solved by the Swedish government. Among the most serious was the question of immigrant children's education. It was not as acute as citizenship and legal problems, but it demanded a lot of thinking and changes. It turned out that to teach immigrant children how to talk and understand Swedish is not enough for them to achieve good results at school and in consequent studies. Many researches in this field have also shown that the mother-tongue plays an indispensable role in the overall development of immigrant children. It helps them to preserve their national identity, to communicate with their parents and to keep contacts with their native country. To add to this, it has been proved that if the child's mother-tongue has not been developed till the abstract level, the child runs the risk to become semilingual (Skutnabb-Kagnas, T., Toukomaa, P., 1976; Johannesson, I., 1976). That means that he/she would not know any language properly.

The Swedish government took the solution to give immigrant children all possibilities to educate and develop themselves. According to the immigration policy that the Riksdag formulated in 1975 and that is valid till now, all immigrant children have the same right as Swedish-born pupils to be educated. What is more, all immigrant children have the right to develop their knowledge of the home language through receiving special school training in it. I would like to underline that these democratic values are central in organising and conducting immigrant children's teaching in Sweden. The Swedish society wants to see immigrants as equal citizens with equal rights and obligations (Lemark, B., 1984).

Since it was understood that the education of immigrant children can contain problems and that it demands a special approach, a lot has been done to make it more effective. However, we cannot say that the question of immigrant children's education is fully answered. There are large gaps left that are waited to be discovered and thoroughly researched. From the scientific sources, that I have gathered and analysed, such as the revision report done in 1990 or the investigations of Wikström, it comes obviously that unsatisfactory results or even failures in teaching immigrant children prevail (Revrapport, 1990; Wikström, I., 1997). From my personal experience I know that in spite of all improvements that have been introduced, many immigrant children find it difficult to study and their school achievements are still much lower than those of their Swedish peers. Because of that I have decided to concentrate myself on the question of immigrant children's education and problems that are connected with it. In this issue I would like to study how the work with immigrant children is conducted at present and to discuss it. I shall mainly focus on the second generation of immigrants, i.e. children who were born in Sweden from non-

Swedish parents and who continue to live in the country. Children who have at least one non-Swedish parent are referred to this group as well.

The outcomes from the present research can facilitate the subsequent elaboration of questions connected with immigrant children's education. Some elements of the pedagogical work with immigrants at the pre-school, which I have studied in this paper and which seem to be effective, can be implied by other educational institutions in their practice. My personal commentaries and remarks, and especially my emphasis on the importance of the mother-tongue training, can be used as guidelines for everyone who works with immigrant children. The sum of the most relevant peculiarities of teaching immigrant children, with which I open the theory chapter, is also viewed as a valuable impact into the topic.

CHAPTER I

The Purpose of the Investigation

Education of immigrant children is one of the numerous pedagogical phenomena that continue to arouse questions concerning the efficiency of dealing with them. Dozens of researches have already been done to understand how the teaching of immigrant pupils should be carried out and how it is possible to make it more effective. A lot of valid suggestions have been given and many of them have become a successful practice. Still there is much to work at, because the results that many immigrant children achieve in learning, leave much to be desired. Another aspect that creates certain problems is the very high percentage of immigrants with various national backgrounds in the Swedish educational system. All these children have individual needs in training Swedish and their mother-tongue, which sometimes are not so easy to satisfy. The mentioned items have determined the general direction of my investigation. The main purpose of the project sounds as follows: *to analyse how the education of immigrant children at the pre-school level is carried out in practice and to discuss it.*

To do this the following practical goals are formulated:

1. to understand better the evolution of attitudes to immigrant children's education in Sweden in order to get a deeper understanding of the present situation in this sphere;
2. to study the present requirements of the state and the commune where I conduct my empirical investigation to the immigrant children's pre-school education;
3. to analyse how theoretical ideas and the authority requirements work in practice on the example of a concrete pre-school. Special attention should be paid to the aspects that I have found important after working at the literature sources;
4. to discuss what is positive and what can be improved in the way the education of immigrant children is carried out at the pre-school of my empirical research.

CHAPTER II

The Study of the Literature Sources

In this chapter I would like to explain how I have worked at the literature for my study. I shall write about how I have chosen the topic for my research and how I have gathered the information I have needed from books. I shall treat the choice of the topic and the collection of the data as one unit, because in my work these aspects have been closely connected.

To begin with, it was not difficult to chose the topic for my investigation. I was sure from the start that I would like to write about immigrants' education in Sweden, mainly because I am an immigrant myself. I knew the main difficulties adult immigrants experience in learning from practical sources, as I had spent some time in the educational institutions for immigrants in Sweden. I checked the Lolita Data Base at the pedagogical library in Lund, using the key combination "immigrants + education" in both English and Swedish variants. Surprisingly enough, among the books that were found, there was almost nothing about the education of grown-up immigrants. The greatest part of the literature was devoted to the specifics of immigrant children's education. I borrowed a couple of reports that dealt with some failures of teaching immigrant children in Sweden. After looking through them, I understood that I would like to focus on this aspect of the broad pedagogical problem of immigrants' education. I was convinced that although many studies in this field had been done before me, the question of immigrant children's education still remains acute and requires further elaboration.

I read the majority of the books that had been found in the Lolita Data Base. At first I made notes about everything that was important and new for me about immigrant children's education. After some reading the purpose of the investigation was formed in my head with a preliminary plan of how the paper should be organised. This narrowed the scope of my interest and made my notes more precise. At this stage of work the book by Miles and Huberman, given on the list of the literature to the course, helped me a lot (Miles, M., Huberman, A., 1994). By creating the conceptual framework of what I was going to investigate and by formulating research questions (see Enclosure I), as it was recommended there, I have made my scientific work easier and more interesting.

When I started the writing, I found it necessary to go deeper in some details. For example, I understood that I should clear it up about the controversial approaches of becoming bilingual. So I used the Libris Data Base, as my tutor had advised me. There I searched mainly for the books that were marked as references to my primary sources. I looked also for the literature there that answered the key word "bilingualism", though I did not concentrate much on it. It was a minor topic.

From the literature study I understood which items of working with immigrant children at the pre-school are more important and difficult to solve than others. Among them there was the organisation of training in Swedish and the mother-tongue for immigrant children, the individualised approach to the needs in teaching of a particular child, the proportion of Swedish and immigrant children in the class, and others. I decided to make these aspects the central focus for my empirical research. Later I used them as key points for the structuring of my empirical results. Buy doing so I followed *the deductive pattern* of conducting an investigation, going basically from theory to practice. I suppose that it was the most effective way to achieve the purpose of my project.

CHAPTER III

The Theoretical Background to the Question of Immigrant Children's Education

The attitudes to the way immigrant children's education should be organised, have undergone a well-observed evolution over the course of time. From rather a superficial understanding of how the teaching of immigrant children should look like, the notion has been developed to a complex system that embraces all stages of the official education. One aim of this chapter is to explain what is so special about the education of immigrant children. Another aim is to go through scientific theories, experiments and governmental decisions, that have become the basis for the present structure of immigrant children's education. The third aim is to study the content of the latest educational plans regarding the requirements to the education of immigrant children today. These procedures will help, from my point of view, to understand deeper the complexity of immigrant children's education. Through that the essential ground for the empirical part of my investigation will be created.

It should be mentioned that while working at this chapter, it became clear that certain moments in it needed instant commentaries from my side. I found it illogical to postpone my ideas concerning the theory aspects till the final unit "Analysis and Discussion". I came to the conclusion that the most appropriate way in my case was to supply the theoretic chapter with my personal remarks and reflections. I think that such a structure of the paper makes it easy for the reader to follow it.

3.1. Specific Features of Immigrant Children's Education

The question of teaching immigrant children is very complicated. It states problems to solve not only in pedagogical, but in sociological and psychological spheres as well. What will become of these children? Will they manage to find their place in this foreign society? Will they be able to realise their creative potential in the environment that differs from their native country?

One of the first aspects that should be considered in connection with immigrant children's education, is the relations of these children to their home culture. It goes without saying that one's home culture plays an extremely important role in shaping one's personality. How should it be with the home culture of immigrant children? The Swedish government gives a very positive answer. According to its immigration policy that was formulated already in 1974, all minorities in Sweden have the right to maintain and develop their own culture (SOU 1974:69). One can remark that the maintenance of one's own culture is hardly realistic without knowing one's mother-tongue, and he will be right. Transmission of cultural traditions to the younger generation in a foreign language *is* very difficult if not completely impossible (Skutnabb-Kangas, T., Toukomaa, P., 1976). Besides, immigrant children should be able to have verbal contacts with their parents and other relatives, whose Swedish can be poor. To achieve this communication, the knowledge of the mother-tongue is very important. What is more, either children's parents or immigrant children themselves can decide to return to their native country in the future. To lead a normal life there without knowing the home language properly, can become very problematic.

The above mentioned arguments drive us to the conclusion that without the mother-tongue, a full, all-sided development of an immigrant child is not likely to be achieved. Of course the grounds for the cultivation of one's mother-tongue are not limited with these arguments only. They are much more. For example, it was proved that the mother-tongue is of great importance for the feeling of personal identity that develops in an immigrant child (Lauren, K., 1973). If a

child cultivates a negative attitude towards his native language, which is not so seldom, it can result in a deep psychological conflict with serious mental and social problems. These destructive consequences can be avoided if together with the development of the mother-tongue of immigrant children, respect and interest to their language is instilled into both them and their Swedish peers (Supplement, 1973). I must admit that although the aspect of psychological well-being among immigrant pupils goes beyond the scope of this paper, which has a pedagogical character, it should not be neglected by educationalists. An immigrant child can be ostracised in a Swedish classroom and it will hinder his effectiveness in the learning process. According to the requirements of the government, teachers should create such an atmosphere at school, that immigrant children feel as accepted members there, instead of feeling as isolated strangers (Supplement, 1970).

Special attention should be paid to the *pedagogical* specifics of teaching immigrant children. Most investigations through out the world where immigrant children have studied, ascertain that their school achievement is poor (for example Haugen, E., 1964; Weinreich, U., 1967; Skutnabb-Kangas, T., Toukomaa, P., 1976). Different reasons have been pondered for that. During the 1970-ies Swedish researchers came to the conclusion that the education of immigrant children can become more effective if the children receive some training in their mother-tongue (Supplement, 1973). Indeed, proper mother-tongue development has proved to facilitate the immigrant child's studies at school and his future self-learning. It was shown that if the mother-tongue is allowed to stagnate when the child begins school, and another language is introduced as a school language, there is a risk of both languages to become incompletely developed. A number of investigations have also shown that the easiness with which many immigrant children use everyday Swedish can merely be a "language facade" that conceals gaps in the real knowledge of this language (Supplement, 1973, p.93). Similar gaps can be found in the mother-tongue. As the consequence the immigrant pupil runs the risk to fail both in his studies in Sweden and, if he returns to his home country, even there. On the other hand, if the pupil's mother-tongue is developed up to the abstract level, it becomes the best foundation for mastering Swedish and for subsequent studies. These grounds indicate that from pedagogical reasons, the development of one's mother-tongue is almost indispensable.

Another specific feature in the education of immigrant children is the way these children are instructed in Swedish. Firstly, to be able to live and function in the Swedish society, immigrant children should master Swedish to a very high degree. Even their political participation calls for very good linguistic skills in Swedish. Thus, the school should give immigrant children as profound knowledge of the Swedish language, as Swedish pupils have (Skutnabb-Kangas, T., Toukomaa, P., 1976). Secondly, Swedish is the second language for them and the methods of teaching it should differ from the methods used when teaching Swedes. Swedish should be taught for immigrant children as a *foreign* language (Wikström, I., 1997). This statement implies that some aspects of the Swedish language, that are naturally acquired by Swedes, should be purposefully trained for immigrants. As an example I can mention training of the use of preposition or of the implementation of different grammatical structures. This all means that in ideal immigrant children need some special instructions in Swedish that are organised separately from their Swedish class-mates.

There should be some more peculiarities that characterise the education of immigrant children, but I think that I have already mentioned the most significant. As one can see, Swedish and the mother-tongue are of primary importance for immigrant children, both as the basis for future learning and for normal functioning in life. The development of these two languages was proclaimed as the goal of immigrant children's education already in 1970-ies in Sweden

(Johannesson, I., 1976; Skutnabb-Kangas, T., Toukomaa, P., 1976). It was officially formulated as *the achievement of bilingualism* (Supplement, 1973).

3.2. Problems of Becoming Bilingual

It is not an easy matter to become bilingual. Originally it was thought that when immigrant children started Swedish school, they already knew Swedish. However, that was not a usual case. Some immigrant children started going to school and received explanations there in Swedish, without knowing this language (Skutnabb-Kangas, T., Toukomaa, P., 1976). One can guess what delays in the learning process were the consequences from that. It became clear that it would be much better if immigrant children could get some training in basic Swedish at their pre-school age. Some reason for doing so were evident: immigrant children would go to school linguistically prepared and they would simply have more time for learning the official language. But everything was not as simple as that. If you remember, immigrant children should develop their home language parallelly, as it is the best basis for all their future learning. Thus, a number of questions arose, and namely, how the training of Swedish and the home language should be correlated, in what age and in what way it should be introduced.

One should not also forget that the previous investigations of bilingualism were of a contradictory nature. On the one hand, there was evidence that bilingualism can result in a pathological disturbances of the child's development. On the other hand, there were data that bilingualism is quite harmless, and if it influences the child, it is in a very positive way (Vygodski, L., 1928; Kelly, L., 1969; Skutnabb-Kangas, T., Toukomaa, P., 1976; Arnberg, L., 1981). Some scientists, like Vygodski and Arnberg, pointed out that the researches which showed pathological results of bilingualism had not been relevant enough. They did not take the age specifics and the level of the children's intellectual abilities into account (Vygodski, L., 1928; Arnberg, L., 1981). There is also an opinion that if the process of teaching the child two languages is carried out correctly, it cannot lead to any negative consequences (Kelly, L., 1969; Arnberg, L., 1981). By the correct method of teaching, the strategy "one person – one language" is meant. This strategy implies that there is a strict separation of languages according to the speaker among the people who surround the child, as it was in the well-known experiment in the Ronget's family. The description and brief analysis of it are given in Vygodski's article "The Question of Multilingual Children" (Vygodski, L., 1928). There, the father was French and he spoke to his son entirely in French. The mother was German and she spoke entirely in German. Other people, with whom the child came in contact, spoke either French or German, but they always stuck to one concrete language. The results were remarkable. The child not only achieved active bilingualism, but the independence of the one language system from the other developed in him rather early. When, for example, the father of the child, speaking in French, sent the boy with some message to the mother, the child would go and talk to her, expressing the sense of the message in pure German without noticeable direct translation from one language into the other.

Without entering the debate of whether the model "one person – one language" is the only successful, that remains open till today, I must admit that in the Swedish conditions it can be easily implied. It should not be necessarily one *person* who uses one language. Instead of the person it can be the whole environment of the home, or of the pre-school institution, or of some pre-school activities, where it has been decided to use a particular language.

Now, I think, it is high time to provide an example of how teaching bilingualism was conducted in Sweden. The 1970-ies here were characterised by a large number of experimental studies at all school and pre-school levels, that were aimed to work out the most appropriate models for

teaching immigrants. I can enumerate projects in Malmö, Norrköping, Olofström, Rinkeby and some other places (Johannesson, I., 1976; Skutnabb-Kangas, T., Toukomaa, P., 1976). In the next section I would like to give a more detailed information about the bilingual teaching programme that has been applied at a pre-school in Malmö. I think it is important to do so, as this programme is a good example of how bilingual teaching of immigrant children at the pre-school can be organised in practice. I shall also provide the illustration with some personal comments, where I find them necessary.

3.3. Bilingual Teaching in Malmö, 1972-1973

The long-term project in Malmö was called "Models for Bilingual Instructions of Immigrant Pupils" and it was started in 1972 (Johannesson, I., 1976). I have paid special attention to this very project because, to my mind, the way of teaching immigrant children of 4-6 years old, that has been introduced there, is very effective. Due to the educational programme, that has been applied in this case, the immigrant children have got all opportunities to extend the knowledge of their mother-tongue as well as to master Swedish. This harmonic development, from my point of view, has become a very good start for the children's subsequent education and self-learning. Besides, it has helped to avoid identity and inferiority complexes, which could have appeared because of belonging to a minority group.

The first point of the project, that I have appreciated very much, was the aim of organising instructions for immigrant children that had been formulated as bilingualism which meant more than merely speaking two languages. Bilingualism in their understanding included also participation in both the cultures, communicated by those languages. One of the practical purposes of such a bilingual education was to prepare immigrant children to live and work freely either in Sweden, or if they would like to return, in their home country.

The second moment, that I view as a positive one, is that the researchers found it *necessary* to start children's bilingual education *earlier* than the compulsory school age. They motivated their choice by emphasising that linguistic development before the age of 7 has a fundamental influence on the development occurring during the child's school career. I think that in this respect they have joined the opinion of the main part of language experts and my personal idea is that they have been right.

The third absolutely positive aspect of the Malmö bilingual project is that the scientists have not restricted themselves to working with pre-school children only. They have divided their project into three parts:

1/ Bilingual pre-school activities
2/ Bilingual comprehensive school instructions
3/ Study activities for the parents whose children get bilingual instructions.

In my work I am going to concentrate on the pre-school level only, because other stages lie beyond the scope of my paper. Nevertheless it is very important to bear in mind that the pre-school teaching of immigrant children should be connected with other school levels and with what parents think about their children's education. The parental position is of such a big value, because it influences greatly the children's attitude to learning.

The project has included the study of a few groups of Finnish children. A number of Finnish families living in Malmö were offered free places for their five and six-year-old children in a

bilingual pre-school programme. Most of the families accepted the offer and the original number of children per group was roughly fifteen. Here I want to draw your attention to the detail that all the children belonged to the Finnish minority group. By that time Finns were the largest minority group in Sweden and they comprised 50% from all immigrants in the country (Skutnabb-Kagnas, T., Toukomaa, P., 1976). I suppose that from the organisational and financial points of view it was not so difficult to arrange high quality bilingual instructions for them. It is always easier and cheaper to find a mother-tongue teacher for a few groups with a large number of children in each, where the teacher will work full time, than to organise mother-tongue studies for a group of four-five children only, which is very often the case in reality. Frankly speaking, I was puzzled that it was repeated from one report to another that the education of immigrant children does not go far, to the greatest extent because of organisational problems. In the Revision Report, for example, they have even pointed out that sometimes a class-room for the mother-tongue studies cannot be found, to say nothing about the mother-tongue teachers, who have to travel all around the commune to give their lessons in different schools (Revisionsrapport, 1990). At first it sounded strange to me that such problems cannot be solved, but then, after certain reflections, I came to the conclusion that unfortunately it is *difficult* and *expensive* to organise the mother-language instructions for very small minority groups as then instructions have to be conducted almost individually.

To return to the bilingual project in Malmö, two educational models were tested there during school year 1972-1973. *The first model* was carried out in a nursery school with about fifteen Finnish-speaking five-year-olds. For most of the training time these children had instructions in Finnish given by a Finnish-speaking teacher. Instructions in Swedish took one hour a day. They were conducted by a Swedish-speaking teacher and were aimed at practising and listening to every-day spoken Swedish. Training the languages took place during the morning and the hour in Swedish was put in between the training in Finnish. The time apportionment was more concerned with the teachers' time-table than with the actual training time that each child received. Whereas most Finnish practice took place in a large group, instructions in Swedish were led in smaller groups, because the children varied in their knowledge in Swedish and they needed a more individualised approach.

The second model was carried out in another nursery school with about fifteen Finnish-speaking six-year-olds. Here these Finnish-speaking children were divided into three groups and placed in three different Swedish nursery school departments. Thus, the immigrant children had practice in Swedish together with Swedes. The practice was conducted by a Swedish-speaking teacher. For instructions in Finnish, Finns were taken in separate groups by a Finnish-speaking teacher who alternated between the three nursery school classes.

The results gained during experimental school year 1972-1973 suggested that the nursery school model for the five-year-olds, i.e. *the all-Finnish department*, worked satisfactorily. The children there were taught in a homogeneous Finnish-speaking environment which gave them greater security and adaptability. The Finnish-speaking teacher had enough time to work at the "enrichment programme" in Finnish, which stimulated the children's mastering the language. The Swedish practice functioned rather good, though the Swedish teacher did not have as much time at her disposal, as she would have liked.

In practical terms, the nursery school model for the six-year-olds, i.e. *the integrated model*, did not work as well as the model for the five-year-olds. The Finnish teacher found that she often visited the nursery school department at somewhat inappropriate moments, for example when the

entire department was involved in some enjoyable group game, so that it was not easy for her to induce the children to leave the game for their individual language practice.

In the experimental activities that followed, only one model of bilingual teaching at the pre-school level has been tested. It was the model incorporating *separate Finnish nursery school groups*. It has proved to have so many advantages that it has been used as a general model for both five-year-olds and six-year-olds.

However, I do not remain negative to the second model of bilingual training that implied working in a mixed Swedish-Finnish group. I do not consider that it was so ineffective that it should be put aside and stopped being practised. The organisational problems, that occurred, showed only the low degree of collaboration between the nursery school teachers and their Finnish-speaking colleague. To my way of thinking, a joined meeting of all the working staff could have been organised, where the Finnish-speaking teacher could have shared the difficulties in gathering children for her training. I am sure that then a certain schedule for the children's activities could have been worked out, so that the children would be ready next time to join the instructions in Finnish without any delays. Probably the children could be engaged in some more individualised tasks and games during the time, when the coming of the Finnish-speaking teacher was expected. In short, there are dozen ways of how these organisational hindrances can be overcome, everything depends on the organisers.

What I like with the second educational model, and what I value as positive, is the fact that in it Finnish-speaking children have the opportunity to communicate with their Swedish peers. I think, it is very important that already from the age of five-six, an immigrant child would realise that he lives in a multi-cultural environment where he should be able to communicate both with his native culture and with the Swedish society. I can already hear someone arguing that at the age of seven the immigrant child will go to school where he will face this multi-cultural reality. But you know, one or even two years in the child's development can mean as much as one hundred years in the evolution of the mankind. My opinion is that the earlier the immigrant child will obtain contacts with the majority culture, the better it will be for the harmonic development of his personality. I think this way because in the future the immigrant child is very likely to stay in Sweden. To lead a normal life he should be able to function in the Swedish society. He should learn how to adapt himself to the Swedish way of living and how, at the same time, to preserve his own culture. It is always better if he starts this learning process at the earlier stages of his life, when he is more flexible and more open to changes.

I understand that in the first model, when there are only children with the same national background in the group and when the communication is conducted mostly in the mother-tongue, the child can feel more protected and safe. On the other hand, I believe that with the right help from the teaching staff, immigrant children can overcome the first difficulties of entering the group with Swedish-speaking children in it. I have used the adjective "first" writing about difficulties deliberately. I find it natural that some tensions between immigrant children and Swedes can occur at first, during the so-called introductory phase of group work. But I am convinced that if the teachers at the nursery school build their communication with children on the democratic basis of their equality to each other and if they cultivate respect to Swedish and the mother-tongue, then the conflicts damaging somebody because of speaking another language should not take place in the future.

From the educational point of view, it would be better for immigrant children to mix with Swedish speaking children and to listen to how they talk Swedish. I think that it will make the

process of learning Swedish for immigrant children quicker and easier, especially when immigrants start to communicate verbally with Swedes, using the knowledge received from the Swedish-speaking teacher.

3.4. The Development of the Governmental Attitude to Immigrant Children's Education

In this unit I would like to go shortly through the most important decisions of the Swedish government regarding the education of immigrant children, that have been taken since this question became acute. My opinion is that it is necessary to do so as it will help to understand better in what way Sweden provides the education of immigrant children with help.

Thus, before the 1960-ies no official goals for the education of immigrant children appear to have existed. In the curriculum for the 9-year compulsory school published in 1962, no mention is made that the teaching of immigrant children can imply certain problems (Johannesson, I., 1976). In 1966 auxiliary instructions for immigrant children were introduced, which included totally 6 periods per week. The main purpose of these instructions was to teach immigrant children quickly to understand and speak Swedish in order to facilitate their school achievements as well as their social adjustment (Revisionsrapport, 1990). The suggestion has also been made to conduct some of the auxiliary instructions in the pupil's mother-tongue, as it was viewed to be very effective (Aktuellt, 1966/67). Unfortunately lack of competent teachers and suitable teaching materials has prevented this suggestion from being put into practice (Johannesson, I., 1976).

Further investigations in the field have shown that the mother-tongue plays a very important role in the development of the child's language ability. Already in 1964 professor Bertil Malmberg wrote in his book "Language and Man" that the child acquaints himself with the environment through the words and concepts of his mother-tongue. He even emphasised the fact that elementary school teaching in a language other than the child's mother-tongue can lead to serious negative consequences, because then the basic pedagogical rule of going from the known to the unknown would be ruined. He also underlined that a good knowledge of the mother-tongue would serve as an asset for mastering of the official country language (Malmberg, B., 1964).

The same view concerning the importance of the mother-tongue was stressed in the report "School attendance at home and abroad", published by the Swedish School Committee in 1966 (SOU, 1966). The Committee proposed that a more serious education for 5 and 6 year old immigrant children should be planned, including reading instructions in their mother-tongue. In the Government Bill that followed in 1968, once again the opinion of the majority of language experts was expressed, that the child should start learning in the language he knows best (Proposition, 1968). To achieve this, experimental work with reading instructions in the minority language was recommended. However, some time elapsed before the experimental activities could be introduced.

New principles for the education of immigrant children were summarised in the National Board of Education's Supplement in 1973 (Supplement, 1973). The first principle reflected essential democratic values and made it explicit that the education of immigrant children should be equivalent to that of Swedish children. The second principle emphasised the role of the mother-tongue and proclaimed bilingual teaching to be the necessity for the personal and social development of immigrant children. I must admit that these principles lie in the basis for the teaching of immigrant children today.

In the law regulating pre-school education, that was passed in 1975, the right of immigrant children to receive adequate support for their development at the under compulsory school-age was clearly defined (Skolförordningen, 1975). The Ministry of Educational Immigrant Committee insisted that local authorities should inform immigrant parents about the importance of the early mother-tongue training for their children and establish the individual need of each immigrant child for support in the development of his native language. The mother-tongue teacher ought to be employed in the commune in order to establish contact with immigrant parents and to discuss what would be the best form of language training for their child. For all immigrant children the participation in Nursery School activities should be recommended from the age of four, as this age is the crucial period when the world of concepts should be pronouncedly enlarged. Taking these items into consideration, the following proposals were put forward by the Immigrant Committee to meet the needs of immigrant children for the mother-tongue training at the pre-school level:

- *Full time pre-school care (Day Nursery)*: To the extent the geographical distance permits, immigrant children from the same language group should be placed at the same Day Nursery in order to develop the knowledge of the home language through communicating with each other. Ambulatory mother-tongue teachers should be included in the resources for regular activities. The time for the mother-tongue training should be spread out over several days a week, and preferably cover parts of both morning and afternoon.
- *Full time pre-school care (Family Day Care)*: Immigrant children over four years old, placed in the care of the family during the day time, should be allowed to participate in part-time Nursery School Education (usually 3 hours per day). If the immigrant child is placed in a family for day care, when he is younger than four, it is expedient that he is placed in a home belonging to the same language group.
- *Part-time Pre-school Education*: The most advisable way is to form groups entirely of immigrant children, who have the same home language, and to provide them with a bilingual teacher. Language training ought to be for 3 hours every day. The other alternative is to form mixed groups from Swedes and immigrant children with the same home language. The per cent of immigrants and Swedes should be equal. If it is possible, groups with immigrant children speaking different native languages should be avoided, as then the risk of mixing languages increases.
  (Förslag, 1975)

It is peculiar that the main development of the state attitudes towards the education of immigrant children took place before the second part of the 1970-ies. At least it came out clearly from working with educational documents, dated both before and after this period. After the innovations introduced in 1975, a very few changes on the governmental level in teaching immigrant children have been made, as the School Laws of 1985 show it (Skollag, 1985:1100). Money subsidising this sphere of education and, as the consequence, connected scientific investigations, were reduced, as it had been found out that the expenses on an immigrant child prevailed the expenses spent on a Swedish pupil (Revisionsrapport, 1990). One can say that the majority of researches, that have constructed the basis for the immigrant children's education, as we have it today, were carried out during the first part of 1970-ies.

3.5. The Requirements to the Pre-school Education of Immigrant Children Today

In this section I am going to concentrate on the latest requirements to the immigrant children's education at the pre-school, that have been given at the state and at the municipal levels. It is

well-known that in Sweden the main educational curriculum for the whole country is worked out by the government. In it the State determines the overall goals and guidelines, that should be striven at and achieved. However, there are no means given by which those goals and guidelines can be attained, as it is already the task of each commune to chose them. Communes are also responsible for the achievement of the determined goals in practise. As a rule municipalities work out their own educational plan, that is based on the governmental one, but that is more concrete and takes all local peculiarities into account.

The state educational curriculum, on which the work at the pre-school is based at present, was edited in 1998. It is the first educational plan for pre-school institutions and its main emphasis lies on the interconnection between three educational levels: the pre-school, the compulsory school and the upper secondary school. These three stages should create an integrated whole in the system of children's education. Among other items that are stressed in the curriculum there is the democratic character of teaching, the intrinsic value of each child, the co-operation between the pre-school and home, the influence of the child as the subject of the pedagogical process and so on. The specifics of the approach, that the children of the pre-school age need, are very well underlined in the curriculum. Special attention is also paid there to the peculiarities of dealing with immigrant children.

It is stated in the curriculum that children in the present situation of cultural diversity should build respect and consideration for each individual irrespective of his background (Lpfö 98, p. 7). Equality of genders should be observed. It should be cultivated in those children, who originally belong to cultures where women take a less active position in the society. It is also pointed out that the pre-school is a social and cultural meeting place which can prepare children for life in an increasingly internationalised community (Lpfö 98, p. 9). To achieve this preparedness, the activities at the pre-school should contribute to the children's awareness of their cultural heritage and participating in the culture of their peers. What is more, children with a foreign background should receive support in the development of dual cultural affiliation (Lpfö 98, p. 9). Upon the whole, immigrant children in the curriculum are referred to as children who have special needs for help, both in terms of attention and money. That way there can be seen a certain connection in attitudes between immigrants and disabled children, as Landenperä has mentioned it, when discussing the school curriculum of 1980 (Lahdenperä. L., 1997). As far as language learning is concerned, it is the task of the pre-school to ensure that children with a mother-tongue other than Swedish, receive the opportunity to develop both their Swedish language and their mother-tongue (Lpfö 98, p. 10). Teachers at the pre-school should help immigrant children to acquire broad knowledge of everyday spoken Swedish. In doing that, teachers should give immigrant children as much support as is needed in each individual case (Lpfö 98, p. 13).

The educational plan of the commune where I have conducted the empirical part of my study, does not contain much information about the specifics of teaching immigrant children at the pre-school. It is in spite of the fact, that there is a special unit devoted to teaching Swedish and mother-tongue in it (Barn och Utbildning, 1999, p.p. 17-19). In this unit it is stressed that much more attention should be paid to mastering Swedish at all educational levels. A special programme should be worked out in the nearest future that will focus on how to improve immigrant children's learning of Swedish. From the municipal educational plan one can also find out that there is the post of a rector for the mother-tongue teaching in the commune, whose responsibility is to take care about the quality of the mother-tongue education (Barn och Utbildning, 1999, p. 19). In general it is said in the plan that all children who require special help, should get it. This can be evidently applied to immigrant children, because they need extra support and care as a rule.

The aspect that has been considered very important in both the state curriculum and the commune plan is the active role of the child in the pedagogical process. I have already mentioned it briefly upwards. This aspect is basic for educating every child in general and an immigrant child in particular. In the state curriculum it is written that children at the pre-school should develop the ability to express their views in order to have the opportunity to influence their own situation and the whole environment at their educational institution. They should also understand and act according with democratic principles by participating in different kinds of co-operation and decision making (Lpfö 98, p.p. 14-15). My opinion is that it is very important to cultivate this feeling of being the subject in the educational system in immigrant children, and to teach them how to take initiative. I think that way because many immigrant children come from less democratic environments than the one it is in Sweden. In many countries the autocratic way of teaching at school still prevails, and a child coming from such an environment should be taught not to be passive. Even if a child was born and has spent his early years in Sweden, his immigrant parents might bring him up using autocratic methods, that were used when they were children themselves. Such a child needs special teaching too, before he can become active. In the latter case the involvement of the parents into a discussion about democratic values in Sweden is also needed. This point, that in some cases the activity of immigrant children in the pre-school life should be purposefully cultivated to replace the brought up passivity, is not underlined either in the state curriculum or in the municipal plan. However, I am sure that it deserves special attention.

Another point that comes out if the idea of the child as the subject of the educational process would be developed, is that not only immigrant children learn from their teacher, but the teacher can also learn from them. I suppose that an immigrant child as a representative of another culture can broaden the teacher's viewing of the world. He can give him the opportunity to discover something entirely new in the familiar surroundings. In that respect working with immigrant children can be seen as an especially creative process.

Summary

In this chapter I have provided the theoretical ground to the question of immigrant children's education in Sweden, with the main focus on the pre-school level. I have enumerated the most important specific features of teaching immigrant children, among which developing the mother-tongue and training Swedish as a foreign language are central. I have mentioned that the strategy "one person – one language" in bringing up a bilingual child is effective and it can be applied in the Swedish environment. I have given a detailed example of how bilingual teaching was conducted in a Swedish pre-school and accompanied it with some of my own reflections. I have gone through the state requirements to the education of immigrant children given during the last decades. Finally, I have concentrated on the latest educational plans, both on the governmental and on the municipal levels.

CHAPTER IV

The Method of the Investigation

In this chapter I shall provide the methodological grounds for the empirical part of my investigation. I shall explain in what way I have conducted it. I shall also name my research method and give reasons why I have used it.

I selected *the qualitative research method* to fulfil my study. The choice was not made at random. When using the quantitative approach one can count certain data and summarise them in the form of numbers and tables. However, the measurement of the quality of the gathered information, and that was what I needed according to the purpose of my investigation, will be left beyond the frames of such a method. Thus, the main purpose of my investigation dictated the selection of the qualitative method. The book by Miles and Huberman (Miles, M., Huberman, A., 1994) and the lectures at the Pedagogical Department assured me that I had chosen the correct method and that it would help me to do a logical scientific work.

The character of my study is empirical. I decided to make it empirical because of several reasons. Firstly, I was eager to find out how such a complicated notion as educating immigrant children functions in reality. Secondly, knowing how much theory differs from practical implementation, I was curious to study how theoretical ideas concerning immigrant children's education find their application in practice. Thirdly, I have never made an empirical study before and I wanted to try it.

I chose the pre-school as the educational level for my investigation. I did so because the pre-school, though it is not obligatory and teaching there is done in the game form, plays an extremely important role in the development of the child's personality and his abilities to acquire knowledge, or so I see it. When a child starts at the pre-school, he is very perceptive to learning. Training in Swedish and in the mother-tongue at the pre-school level can serve as a solid foundation for the further school achievements in particular and life-long learning in general.

I decided to be anonymous in my project. I do not name the pre-school and the commune where I conducted my empirical study. I do it on purpose. I suppose that being anonymous allows me to remain more objective and critical. When omitting the names, I am able to give negative commentaries without being afraid to spoil the reputation of the pre-school and the commune.

One can observe a division in my paper into the theoretic and the empirical parts. I applied different means of collecting data for them. For the theory part I used library sources, as I have written in Chapter II. For the empirical part I went to the neighbouring pre-school where I knew some immigrant children should be found, because of the "immigrant reputation" of the district. I visited the pre-school many times. The first time I went there, I had the questions in writing that covered the most important aspects of immigrant children's education (see Enclosure II). I have already explained in Chapter II what helped me to decide, which items in this topic are of primary importance. Yet, I did not look at the list of them while talking to one of the pre-school teachers. I just followed the general pattern of the conversation that I had planned, leaving much space for improvisations. From this talk I learned a lot about the pre-school work with immigrants, but the information was heterogeneous. To make a structure of it, I prepared a scheme of titles that corresponded to the aspects which I had defined as the most important. I sorted the collected data according to the topics the titles introduced and wrote them down. I felt that there were many places left that I needed to clear up. I made up a new set of questions and

went to the same teacher to get the answers (to see an example of my diary notes look Enclosure III). However, I thought that my paper would be very subjective if I built it on the views of only one teacher. So I arranged meetings with three other teachers. I talked shortly with the rector as well. In these conversations I emphasised the same aspects that I had characterised as focal. The results were again sorted out. Still I saw that it was not enough. To understand the communication aspects, for example, I wanted to participate myself in some pre-school activities. I fixed a paper from the rector that allowed me to spend some time with the children. With it I visited the pre-school again. This time I made observations in a group of eighteen children. I was not passive. If the children addressed me, I answered them, and I can say that I became a part of their games. These observations were a learning experience! It was as if I had discovered a new world. I did not restrict myself to certain frames there, knowing that if I did not need a part of the material for my paper, I can use it in my future life. When my project was almost finished, I felt inspired to go little deeper in it. I talked to two immigrant mothers, whose children were attending the pre-school (for the preliminary questions to these conversations see Enclosure IV). This was aimed to get the picture of the pre-school work from the immigrant parents' side and thus to broaden the scope of my paper.

It is important to mention that I did not follow any special tactics when I chose people for my interviews and observations. In my interviews I engaged those teachers who were free at the moments I was at the pre-school. For my observations I went to the group of children that was first suggested to me. To find the opinion of immigrant parents, I talked to two mothers whom I knew little from my studies at KomVux, though our degree of acquaintance was so inconsiderable, that it hardly influenced the results, or so I suppose. What I want to stress is that it is very likely that if my informants had been different, they could have provided me with other facts, and my final results could have been completely different. However, I do not think that it would have made my work more valuable scientifically. Besides, I was convinced that if I were non-selective to the subjects of my research, I would collect the most objective information. Perhaps I was not absolutely correct here, but one never knows before he tries.

It is also possible that if I had supplied my paper with some details that I omitted because of its restricted size, the general impression from my work could have been different. I realise too that if I had chosen other aspects of immigrant children's education, I could have got different outcomes. Yet, it should not have influenced my work much, as I tried to be very objective and to choose the most relevant items in the topic.

To round it off, the process of working at the project generated new ideas and insights. There is a strong belief that they can be used as the basis for the further exploration of the topic. What was more, as with many difficult tasks that are done "with soul", a genuine feeling of pride and a sense of accomplishment developed after the study had been completed. These emotions became a worthy reward for the time and effort spent.

CHAPTER V

The Results from the Empirical Investigation of Immigrant Children's Education at the Pre-school Level

One of the main problems with almost all pedagogical notions is that even if they sound very good in theory, it is not an easy matter to make them function very well in practice. In real life one faces hundreds of hindrances that prevent the pedagogical notion from functioning as smoothly as it should. Knowing that, I decided to study how the education of immigrant children, an extremely complicated phenomenon, is organised and conducted in reality. The object of my attention became an ordinary pre-school in a provincial town in Skåne. The aim of this chapter is to provide the results of how the education of immigrant children is carried out in this pre-school, as I viewed it. When doing that, I shall stress those factors, which I find most important in the topic. I shall also supply my writing with a few commentaries which I think cannot be neglected.

5.1. General Information about the Pre-school where the Empirical Research Took Place

The pre-school, in which I have conducted the empirical part of my study, is located in the suburb area of a small town, where a large per cent of immigrant families live. It belongs to the rectoral territory of a secondary school, with which it has constant co-operation. There are three departments in the pre-school. Each department consists of a group of about twenty children. These children are of different age, from one to five years old. The point of mixing children of different ages is that they can learn from each other while playing together. They will also understand that children are different and that the youngest should receive special help. However, children from the same age group take part in some joined activities. For those, who are four years old, joined activities are organised two times a week. For those, who are five – four times a week. An example of such an activity is going out of town or visiting a museum. Forms of joined activities are chosen according to the desires of children and their parents.

There is a certain number of disabled children in each group. Some of them are severely handicapped, but it does not prevent them from mixing with other children and participating in their games. No ostracising behaviour is observed towards them. The pre-school personnel takes the stand point that children from their early years should learn that some of their peers are handicapped and their abilities are restricted. Disabled children should be treated as equal personalities and they should get support when they need it. To my mind, such an attitude to those children, who need special help, is a very good illustration of high democratic values at the pre-school. It shows me that not only a disabled child, but every child including immigrants, will get the support he needs both from the teachers and the children's collective.

As far as immigrant children are concerned, their amount at the pre-school is not small. They are proportionally placed in all three departments. In each group they comprise little more than one third from the total number of children. It means that they are eight or nine among twenty. The pre-school personnel watch that the per cent of immigrants in each group does not go higher that level. If all vacancies are occupied, i.e. if immigrant children already represent little more than one third, a new immigrant child would not be accepted by the pre-school. In this case the immigrant family would be asked either to wait till a place becomes free, or to try another pre-school. I have been explained that the reason for doing so is that when the per cent of immigrant children is about fifty, their learning of Swedish becomes non-productive. They start to talk their home-language with each other, instead of using Swedish. Besides, it is not so easy to select these 50% of immigrant children so, that they are of the same national origin. If they represent

different language groups, the danger occurs that the mixture of languages will take place. The consequences from that will be frustrating.

Finally, I must admit that all immigrant children at the pre-school are of the second generation. They were born in Sweden from non-Swedish parents who had come from ex-Yugoslavia, Iran and Somalia. There is no differentiation at the pre-school between children, who are Swedish and who are not Swedish. The isolation of immigrant children as an educational group, that I am making below, can be seen little artificial. Yet, I need to do that way, because my paper is about immigrant children, not about children in general.

5.2. The Absence of the Mother-tongue Training for Immigrant Children at this Pre-school

In the theoretic chapter I have explained why it is so important for immigrant children to learn their mother-tongue (see Chapter III units 3.1 and 3.4). I have rendered from the state documents that it is most desirable for immigrant children to get some training in the mother-tongue at the early stages of their growth (see Chapter III unit 3.4). I have also given evidence from the latest governmental curriculum that the pre-school should help immigrant children to develop their mother-tongue (see Chapter III unit 3.5). One can understand how surprised I was when I found out that there is *no* mother-tongue training for immigrant children at this pre-school.

The reason for that is seen in the shortage of financial resources. The commune to which the pre-school belongs does not provide it with money for the arrangement of the mother–tongue training, though, as I was told, it is needed. Some immigrant children do not know their home language well enough to achieve the required level in Swedish. It happens often that they cannot name an object both in their mother-tongue and in Swedish. For example, instead of saying that a chair is a chair, they can say that it is something we can sit on. They do not know how it is called. Another common problem with immigrant children today is that after watching much TV with English sub-titles, they start to mix already three languages, Swedish, English and the mother-tongue, without much understanding of any of them. All the teachers can do, is to explain to the immigrant parents the importance of the mother-tongue for their child's development and instruct them to use as much mother-tongue at home as it is possible. They also do not recommend to let children watch TV often.

I should mention that the teachers wish the mother-tongue training could be included in the schedule of the pre-school. They recollect how it was about ten years ago when they had ambulatory mother-tongue teachers who where coming to carry out this activity. Then many difficulties of teaching immigrants that they have now, did not exist. On the other hand they understand that no money means no money, and maybe only in the distant future instructions in the mother-tongue will become a part of the pre-school life.

5.3. Training of Swedish for the Immigrant Children at this Pre-school

As long as there is no mother-tongue training for immigrant children, learning Swedish has become their central activity at the pre-school. It should be kept in mind that children start at the pre-school not necessarily at the beginning of autumn, as it is the case with the compulsory school. Usually they start when it is more convenient for their parents and that can be any time of the year. Thus, the teacher should pay attention to the each child's individual level of knowing Swedish, and it can vary immensely. Some immigrant children come to the pre-school without knowing a word in Swedish. Others know just a few phrases. It is the task of the teacher to help them acquire the basis of the Swedish language. What makes the teacher's work easy, is the fact

that at the pre-school age children are very quick to learn a foreign language. After two-three months of attending the pre-school, a child who could not any Swedish before, understands without difficulties the instructions of the teacher given in Swedish. He starts also to use Swedish to obtain verbal communications with his teachers and peers.

The official duration of training in Swedish with the teacher differs depending on the age of children. As a rule it is included in the time that is dedicated to joined activities. Nevertheless, I cannot say that one can differentiate strictly, when the training in Swedish starts and when it finishes. It is a long-lasted process that embraces all aspects of the pre-school work. All the communication at the pre-school is conducted in Swedish and through it immigrant children learn everyday Swedish expressions. They learn not only from teachers, but from their Swedish peers as well. This form of mastering Swedish is seen as one of the most efficient. Immigrant children broaden their knowledge of the foreign language naturally and profoundly through the course of games, in which native speakers participate.

I have observed many other forms of training Swedish that are implied at this pre-school. The choice of the form depends often on the teacher and his preferences. One of the most effective ways to stimulate the child's interest in using Swedish is involving him in a dialogue. The teacher can ask the child about something, that is regularly repeated during the pre-school activities. To take an example, during breakfast the teacher can ask what the child is drinking or eating. Very much attention is paid to how the child names objects. When children are drawing or playing with something, they can be asked what kind of a thing they have in their hands. If the child fails to answer that he holds a pencil, when he says that it is something he can draw with, the teacher would train the word "pencil" in their subsequent conversations (e.g., Teacher: Look, I have a red pencil. Eric has a blue pencil. Do you have a pencil?).

In the afternoon children of five years old have the so-called reading activity. During the time that it lasts, they listen to how their teacher reads or retells a story. The children can even make up a story of their own, completing sentences that their teacher offers. Very often the reading is followed by a discussion of the events from the story.

Watching films and animated cartoons is not so popular at the pre-school. At first it seemed to me to be strange, because this means of learning a language is always recommended to be included. Then I was explained that children who attend the pre-school live mostly in blocks of flats, and instead of playing in the garden, their usual activity is watching TV at home. This is a passive entertainment and it does not stimulate the development of the child's imagination and creativity. In big amounts it can be destructive. Thus, the teachers at the pre-school try to avoid video programmes in their work, using them not more than twice a month.

5.4. The Activity of the Immigrant Children in the Pedagogical Process

Immigrant children and Swedes are equally important in the pedagogical process. They are seen as active subjects and are treated according to the requirements of the latest educational curricula. Their personalities are respected, their needs are taken into view. Their desires and interests are regarded as the basis for choosing activities at the pre-school. It means that before planning, the teachers ask children, immigrant as well as Swedish, what they will prefer to do. The answers form the pre-school schedule.

To my mind, another evidence of immigrant children's playing an active role in the pre-school life is that their cultural and religious differences are always observed. The menu of Muslim

children would be prepared in such a way, that they would never be offered pig's meat. If everyone is going to visit a church, what is usually done when the Easter approaches, immigrant parents would be asked if their children can join the activity and what they should do, if they cannot. These examples also show that the pre-school stimulates the participation in the culture of immigrant children like it was advised in the governmental curriculum (see Chapter III unit 3.5). It cultivates a respectful attitude towards minority traditions both in Swedes and immigrant children.

5.5. Communication of the Immigrant Children with their Swedish Peers and Teachers

Immigrant children have problems in communicating with their peers and teachers, though these problems are more linguistic than social. Meagre skills in knowing Swedish prevent them from participating in conversations on equal terms. Teachers do their best to involve immigrant children in dialogues with Swedes, for the former to develop the knowledge of Swedish efficiently, as I have mentioned it in section 5.3.

If the teachers notice that an immigrant child have social problems in communication, they try to help him get rid of inner complexes that prevent him from being a good companion. If the problems are too serious for the teachers to solve them, they find it necessary to call for a doctor who is a specialist in the area.

5.6. The Role of the Immigrant Children's Parents in the Life of the Pre-school

Parents in general play an active role in the life of the pre-school. They are very welcome to spend some hours there, participating in the games or just observing their children. It is seen as an opportunity for them to feel the atmosphere about the pre-school and to understand the inner world of their children. There is no difference observed between the activity of Swedish and immigrant parents or their engagement in the pre-school processes. Here, as I was told, the nationality does not matter much. Everything depends on the personal qualities of a particular parent.

As I have already mentioned upwards, immigrant parents are instructed that they should lead all communications with their children in their home language. If the teachers notice that an immigrant child has some problems in his development, for example he is mixing Swedish with his mother-tongue while describing pictures, they contact the child's parents immediately, explaining the matter. According to the seriousness of the problem, the teachers suggest that the child need some extra training or even the support of a doctor. Then the parents decide whether they should accept the suggestion. I was told that there were times when parents insisted that everything was good with their children and they refused any help, though it was offered free of charge. I could only feel sorry for those children and I still keep wondering whether there are diplomatic ways of explaining to parents the erroneousness of their view.

In case when immigrant parents are not able to communicate in Swedish, a professional interpreter is invited to help to organise the communication between the parents and the pre-school personnel. The conversation becomes little different with the participation of the third person. It takes more time, it is not so vivid and the translation of some peculiar Swedish phenomena can arise certain difficulties. Besides, the interpreter should be a real specialist in his field and he should promise to keep the subject of the conversation confidential. Luckily, the cases when an interpreter is needed are very rare nowadays, because the immigrant parents of

this region have lived long in Sweden and they have mastered the basic level of the Swedish language.

5.7. Teaching Staff and Planning at the Pre-school

There are eight teachers and six nurses working at the pre-school. All of them have education that enables them to provide children of the pre-school age with support and instructions that are demanded. In general they produce an impression of highly competent specialists who know very well how to organise and conduct children's education. They are open and eager to help. They create an atmosphere of friendliness and co-operation. They do their best to stimulate children's interest in acquiring knowledge and in broadening their out-look. They hurry to solve all conflicts that occur. In short, their work has a positive impact on children's development, or so I have understood it.

Yet, there are no teachers who have received special training in how they should deal with immigrant children. I think that it is a considerable disadvantage. The process of teaching immigrants has some specific features that should be known by an educationalist. It is possible that through the course of work with immigrant children a teacher learns what is needed from him, but it is always better to know everything in advance and to have this knowledge in a structured form. When a teacher learns from practice only, there is always a risk that he can miss something.

Teachers at the pre-school pay a lot of attention to the planning of their activities. As I was told, this process takes several stages. Firstly, after the new state curriculum had been published, the teaching staff of the pre-school gathered together with their rector and analysed its content. They made notes about the goals that were of primary importance according to the governmental requirements. Secondly, when the municipal plan came into being, they organised another meeting and discussed what they should strive towards according to the communal guidelines. They also checked how it would go with the financial supplement of the pre-school. Actually they made the same steps as me, when I prepared to visit the pre-school: we both worked at the requirements that the state and the commune had set for the pre-school education. One difference was that I did not focus on the financial grounds. Another difference was that the teaching staff went much further than me. Their third step was that they made up a local plan of their work, taking the educational curricula and the specifics of the pre-school environment into consideration. This plan was of a general character. Fourthly, they started to work out short plans for every week. To do this, they gathered again together, only their rector was absent, as his presence was not any longer necessary. At the moment they continue to organise meetings, in which all the teaching staff participates. The meetings take place approximately every week, though they do not follow a fixed time-table.

The reason why I have written about teachers' planning in my paper about immigrant children is that this activity is very important for achieving a high quality education. I suppose that it helps much to find the correct approach to how immigrant children, whose levels of preparedness vary greatly, should be trained. Besides, it shows how collaborated the staff collective at the pre-school is, as it is in the habit of solving all the questions together. Their co-operation can become a good example of how people should communicate with each other, and both, immigrant children and Swedes, can learn much from them.

Summary

In this chapter I have been concentrating on how immigrant children's education at the pre-school is conducted in practice. The object of my study has been an ordinary pre-school in a provincial town. I have rendered how the work with immigrant children is conducted there. I have paid my attention to the aspects that I have found especially important in this area. Thus, I have given some general facts about the pre-school. I have emphasised that there is no mother-tongue training there and stressed what difficulties this absence arouse. I have explained how training in Swedish is conducted and what role immigrant parents play in the pre-school life. I have provided some evidence that immigrant children are active subjects in the pedagogical process. I have also talked about immigrant children's communication and characterised the teaching staff at the pre-school. I am convinced that I have gathered enough information and the information of the right quality to organise a deep-rooted analysis and a fruitful discussion in my last unit.

CHAPTER VI

Analysis and Discussion

In this chapter I am going to summarise the out-comes from my investigation, including both the theoretical and the empirical parts. I shall shortly go through the most important conclusions from the theory chapter which I have used as the basis for my empirical research. I shall provide some commentaries on them. I shall discuss the results from my empirical investigation in detail. I shall analyse my work at this project and suggest what could have been done differently. I shall also formulate the scientific relevance of my paper and give guide-lines for the further exploration of the topic.

To start with, Sweden has rapidly become multi-cultural after the Second World War. The reason for that was an intensive immigration flood into the country. Some of the newly arrived immigrants were of a political origin. Another large group comprised labour-market immigrants, who were in demand because of the Swedish industrial growth. Totally the number of immigrants reached the figure of 600 000 at the beginning of the 1970-ies in Sweden. Such a big amount of foreigners in the country needed special treatment from the part of the government. Among the most serious questions that should be considered was the question of educating immigrant children. Rather soon it was proved that by only learning Swedish, immigrant children failed to achieve good results at the Swedish school, to say nothing about psychological and sociological problems that damaged their well-being. Then the indispensability of the children's mother-tongue came into view. The development of the mother-tongue was needed because of pedagogical reasons – it served as a very good foundation for mastering Swedish in particular and for life-long learning in general. It was also needed for immigrant children to preserve their national identity, to keep contacts with their native culture and to talk literally the same language with their parents. That was how the goal of immigrant children's education in Sweden became bilingualism.

There are many controversial approaches to how the child should become bilingual. Some findings showed that bilingualism can influence the pathological development of the child's personality. Other investigations led to the conclusion that if the process of acquiring two languages is conducted correctly, the results would be only positive. It still remains a question, what ways or achieving bilingualism should be regarded as correct, but the majority of researchers agree that the strategy "one person – one language" has all the chances to be very successful. This strategy implies that each person sticks strictly to a certain language when talking to the child who should become bilingual. My opinion was that this model can be easily applied in Sweden to teach immigrant children. The only difference would be that instead of a person the whole environment would play the role of one-language user. My empirical research has shown that it is actually the case in reality. Immigrant parents are advised to talk only their mother-tongue with the child. At the pre-school, on the contrary, all activities are run in Swedish. Thus, there is an evident differentiation between the spheres, where both the languages are used: the mother-tongue is used at home and Swedish is used at the pre-school institution. Even if some training in the mother-tongue is introduced at the pre-school, the principle of "one environment – one language" will be preserved. Then the mother-tongue teacher and the room, where this training will be held, will mark the unique environment of the mother-tongue usage at the pre-school.

The Swedish government created all possibilities for immigrant children to develop their knowledge of the mother-tongue and to master Swedish. I came to this view point after working

with the state documents of the last decades. Immigrant children got some auxiliary hours for practising Swedish as a foreign language in their school schedules. They received also an opportunity to be trained in their mother-tongue at school. The interests of immigrant children in education were protected by the governmental democratic policy, that proclaimed the equality of rights for Swedish and immigrant pupils. A lot of money, especially at the first part of 1970-ies, was subsidised on the research that was aimed to find more effective ways of teaching immigrant children. Much attention was paid to the education of immigrant children at the pre-school age (I should remark that when we talk about the education at the pre-school, we should not forget that it is not formal and is conducted in a light game form). Rather soon it became clear that immigrant children should get a basic preparation to their studies at the Swedish school, where the language of instructions is Swedish. Besides, many language experts pressed the point that immigrant children should not spend their early years without purposeful language training that would ease their subsequent learning. By language training they meant first of all training of the mother-tongue, the basis for acquiring further knowledge, and then Swedish. Some bilingual models of teaching at the pre-school were tried not without success in practice. The result was that the government suggested that immigrant children should be best organised in a homogeneous immigrant group and be trained their mother-tongue at the pre-school. The second desirable possibility was to form mixed groups with the equal number of Swedes and immigrants of the same national background. In any case, immigrant parents should be informed how important it is to develop their child's ability to use the mother-tongue and by what means this development can be achieved.

Naturally enough, some problems had occurred, and among them organisational hindrances, before the system of immigrant children's education started to work relatively smoothly. However, I got an impression that at present not much is being done to make the education of immigrant children better. It seemed to me as if the serious elaboration and practical testing in the field have stopped long ago and at the moment the system continues to function as it used to, say twenty years ago. Yet, it calls for improvement! The achievements of immigrant children at school remain lower than those of their Swedish peers. I can even guess that because of that, immigrant children can become potential outsiders at the labour market, which looks primarily for highly educated people.

To continue, I got some critical remarks concerning educational plans both at the state and at the municipal levels, which are in force at present. I did not like the fact that not much attention is paid to the question of immigrant children's education there. Nothing is emphasised that training of immigrant children at the pre-school should follow a specific pattern because Swedish is their second language. Nothing is said there distinctly, whether instructions in the mother-tongue should be organised or not. Even the goal of immigrant children's education is not explicitly formulated. Actually, I remain more critical to the municipal educational plan, than to the state curriculum. While reading the governmental programme, one can come across some goals and guidelines for working with immigrants, though I would prefer to have them systematised. However while reading the municipal plan, one can hardly get an understanding of how the pre-school education of immigrant children in the commune should look like. It is in spite of the fact, that a municipal education plan should contain some details concerning how the goals and guidelines from the state curriculum can be reached.

My personal opinion is that the official attitude to the question of immigrant children's education should be more serious. I appreciate that immigrant children with some of their special needs are mentioned at all in the state curriculum. It is very good that it is underlined there that all children should be treated equally and that those who need extra help should get it. Yet, I think that

immigrant children deserve to be treated as a separate educational group in the plans. The grounds for that are that, firstly, about one ninth of the Swedish population are immigrants and the number of children among them is not small. Secondly, immigrant children really need some special training at the pre-school that differs from the training other children should have. Thirdly, without the right pedagogical help from the very early stages, immigrant children can run the risk to fail in the harmonic development of their personalities because of the bilingual environment around them. Thus I propose that the information about immigrant children's special needs and goals to achieve, should by all means preserve in the plans, being concentrated in a separate unit. I suppose that in the state curriculum it is advisable to give a strict definition, what children should be treated as immigrants, because still this aspect is rather vague. I also suggest that it should be indicated there precisely, whether the instructions in the mother-tongue should be organised at the pre-school or not. On the municipal level I would prefer to have some concrete recommendations of how the pre-school education of immigrant children should be carried out in the commune and who should be responsible for that.

As far as the empirical part of my study is concerned, I have a lot to comment on. First of all, I liked the general atmosphere about the pre-school. It was friendly, cordial and very democratic. I liked that the teachers and nurses were always ready to help if a child needed something. I think that it was the right approach to mix children of different ages into one group, as well as to mix healthy and disabled children. I join the opinion of the pre-school staff that these measures help children to learn from each other and to understand that people are different. I also agree that it is a good idea to split immigrant children between three departments, so that their number is not more that one third in each group. This proportion really makes the communication between immigrants and Swedes, which stimulates the natural way of mastering Swedish for immigrants, easier. However, I am not sure that this splitting should be observed for all the pre-school activities, what is the case there. My point is that for some games, especially games that are aimed at training Swedish, immigrant children could be joined together. I think that way because immigrant children are worse in knowing Swedish than their Swedish peers. For me it means that immigrant children should get some additional instructions in Swedish to catch up with the knowledge of an average Swedish child. So I suggest that there should be organised certain activities for immigrant children only, the purpose of which would be to master Swedish.

Secondly, I did not like the fact that there was no mother-tongue training at the pre-school. My opinion is that all my paper was directed to show how important the development of the mother-tongue for immigrant children is. In the theory chapter I rendered the proposals of the Swedish government dated 1975, where the necessity of the mother-tongue training was taken into consideration (see Chapter III unit 3.4). I also gave an example of how instructions in the mother-tongue and Swedish were effectively combined at a Malmö pre-school (see Chapter III unit 3.3). This material can be used by any pre-school as the starting point to organise the bilingual training, or so I suppose. However, at the pre-school that I visited, the mother-tongue training does not exist not because they do not want it, but because they cannot afford it. More than that, the pre-school staff would like to include the mother-tongue in their educational programme, but the commune does not have money for that. Yet, there is a saying that there are no such problems that cannot be solved. I believe that with the right amount of enthusiasm, the question regarding the mother-tongue training can be raised up to the municipal level. There the way out can be found in the course of fruitful discussions. I hope that I do not sound too optimistic.

Thirdly, I appreciated how the training of Swedish was conducted at the pre-school. I think that it was carried out in a variety of forms that were exciting and efficient for children. There the game

and the educational aspect were integrated successfully, so that the children enjoyed the activity and learned from it at the same time. To my mind, it was very good that involving in a dialogue became one of the main means of developing Swedish, because it is interesting and productive. I liked also that the pre-school teachers used an individual approach to each immigrant child and his level of preparedness. Without that no effective work is possible.

Fourthly, I evaluated highly that for the teachers all the children at the pre-school were equally good. Except for the language training and some communication aspects there was no difference seen in the way the immigrant children and Swedes were treated. Everything had been done at the pre-school to help the immigrant children be active subjects in the pedagogical process. Their interests, desires and cultural specifics were always observed. For me this was another evidence of high democratic values which are the characteristic of Sweden.

Fifthly, I saw with regret that the immigrant children did have linguistic problems in the communication with Swedes. For me it is a sign that something should be done with the situation. The immigrant children's knowledge of Swedish should be deepened at the pre-school to approach the level of their Swedish peers. Once again I return to the additional instructions in Swedish for immigrant children, about which I have written upwards. I should also add that I liked the fact that the teachers are always eager to help those who had difficulties in obtaining contacts. I liked it because communication plays an extremely important role in the child's overall development, and if it cannot be achieved naturally, grown-ups should support children to establish it.

Sixthly, I was impressed how the communication between the staff and the immigrant parents was arranged at the pre-school. Honestly, I have never thought that such a high degree of confidentiality and respect towards the parental opinion is possible in reality. I was positively surprised that it is not the pre-school, that decides if a child needs medical help, but the child's parents. Of course under this condition the risk grows that parents, especially immigrant parents who are not so familiar with the Swedish environment, can come to a false decision. Yet, the pre-school teachers were always ready to enter a discussion with parents, to clear up dubious details and thus to protect the latter from making a mistake. I realise that here a lot depends on the personality of a teacher. If he can be argumentative, tolerant and understanding, then his chances to persuade parents in his point of view are very big. If not, he is likely to be a failure.

I liked that all parents were welcome to participate in the activities of the pre-school. It is to what pre-school institutions in Russia are only coming today. It was also a pleasant surprise to me, that the pre-school personnel was prepared to lead conversations with immigrant parents by means of an interpreter, if it was needed. I understand that maybe now I underline such moments that are obvious to Swedes and that from their point do not deserve special attention. However for me, a person with another national background, these items seem to be very important. They mirror that democratic principles, and among them the respect to another personality, are observed in different spheres of life in Sweden and that can become an example for other countries.

Seventhly, I enjoyed to deal with the personnel at the pre-school. My impression was not too deep, but from what I had observed I concluded that the teachers and nurses suited their job. They seemed to like being with children and to understand their needs. I also liked how methodologically the planning of the educational activities was organised there. I am convinced that it made the pre-school functioning very productive.

I have mentioned that none of the teachers had a special education for working with immigrants and this I view it as a weak side. Though I realise that the problem again was in money resources, which were not enough. Otherwise the pre-school staff could have taken courses directed at the specifics of educating immigrant children. This could have been fulfilled in the one by one order to make it more convenient for the pre-school work. In the situation as it was at the pre-school, I can see the way out in the fact that the personnel should discuss thoroughly all the difficulties that occur concerning immigrant children's teaching. This can be done at their joined meetings. Together with these discussions, realistic guidelines can be formulated regarding the individual development of immigrants, who have problems in learning.

So, in this paper I have analysed and discussed how the education of immigrant children at the pre-school level in Sweden is conducted. In short the conclusions from my study are:

- The education of immigrant children is a very serious phenomenon that cannot be neglected. It involves a number of specific features that should be observed by pedagogues. Among them the mother-tongue training from the early stages of the child's life takes one of the central places.
- The state and the municipal curricula, that are in force now, should contain a more detailed information concerning the requirements to the education of immigrant children at the pre-school, or so I have found it.
- The main draw-back of the work with immigrant children at the pre-school where I have been is that there is no mother-tongue training there. This draw-back is very serious, because it can lead and actually leads to the underdevelopment of immigrant children. My hope is that the nearest future will make it explicit that instructions in the mother-tongue should by all means be introduced at the pre-school level. At present it is necessary that immigrant parents do with their children what the pre-school cannot do, i.e. they should practise the usage of the mother-tongue as much as it possible at home.
- It is not good either that the personnel at the pre-school have no special training how to deal with immigrant children. Though I see it as a minor draw-back, because with the help of working experience, discussions with colleagues and even reading special literature, a teacher can understand how the education of immigrants should be conducted.
- Other aspects of working with immigrant children, such as training of Swedish, making immigrant children active in the pedagogical process, helping immigrant children to obtain contacts with Swedish peers, communicating with immigrant parents, I find to be conducted very professionally and productively at the pre-school. I think that other educational institutions can share this experience with benefit.
- If any pre-school would like to start the bilingual teaching for immigrant children, it can take an example from the experiment in Malmö in 1972-1973, which was in the focus of my attention in the theory chapter. My opinion is that both models used there are effective if they are implemented correctly.
- I was very lucky that I had chosen this very topic for my study. Now I know at what aspects I should pay more attention while bringing up my own children in the future, who will be Russian speaking in the Swedish environment. This profit I view as a very important practical out-come from my investigation.

The scientific value of this paper can be seen in the fact that it has added much to the elaboration of the topic of teaching immigrant children. It has shown that there are still items in the pre-school system of immigrant children's education that call for improvement. It has provided examples of how certain aspects of the work with immigrant children can be efficiently

organised. These patterns can be used by other pre-schools in their practice. The most important specific features of teaching immigrant children, which I have summarised in the theoretic chapter, can be also of much help for those, who deal with immigrant children.

I think that the subsequent extension of the topic of this project can be in the research of how, to take an example, immigrant parents help their children of the pre-school age to develop the mother-tongue at home. For doing this the results from my conversations with immigrant parents, which were not fully used in this work because of their irrelevance to the focus of the paper, can be used as a starting point. It is also interesting to continue the research by investigating how the education of immigrant children is conducted at the pre-school class or at the initial stages of the compulsory school. The third possibility is to compare how the instructions of immigrants are organised at other pre-schools.

I realise that there should be certain moments in my paper that are far from being perfect. Perhaps I should have chosen other forms of collecting data, for example I could have worked more with state documents which formulated the requirements to immigrant children's education. Perhaps I should have studied how the pre-school evaluates immigrant children's achievements in learning and added it to the results of my work. Besides, I think that if I had interviewed other people about working with immigrants, who were probably more negative to the pre-school, the out-comes from my study could have been different. A researcher should bear in mind that such a variant is always possible when he collects qualitative data from a relatively small number of sources. I also feel that I have learned much from working at this project and I shall use the experience I gained in my future investigations.

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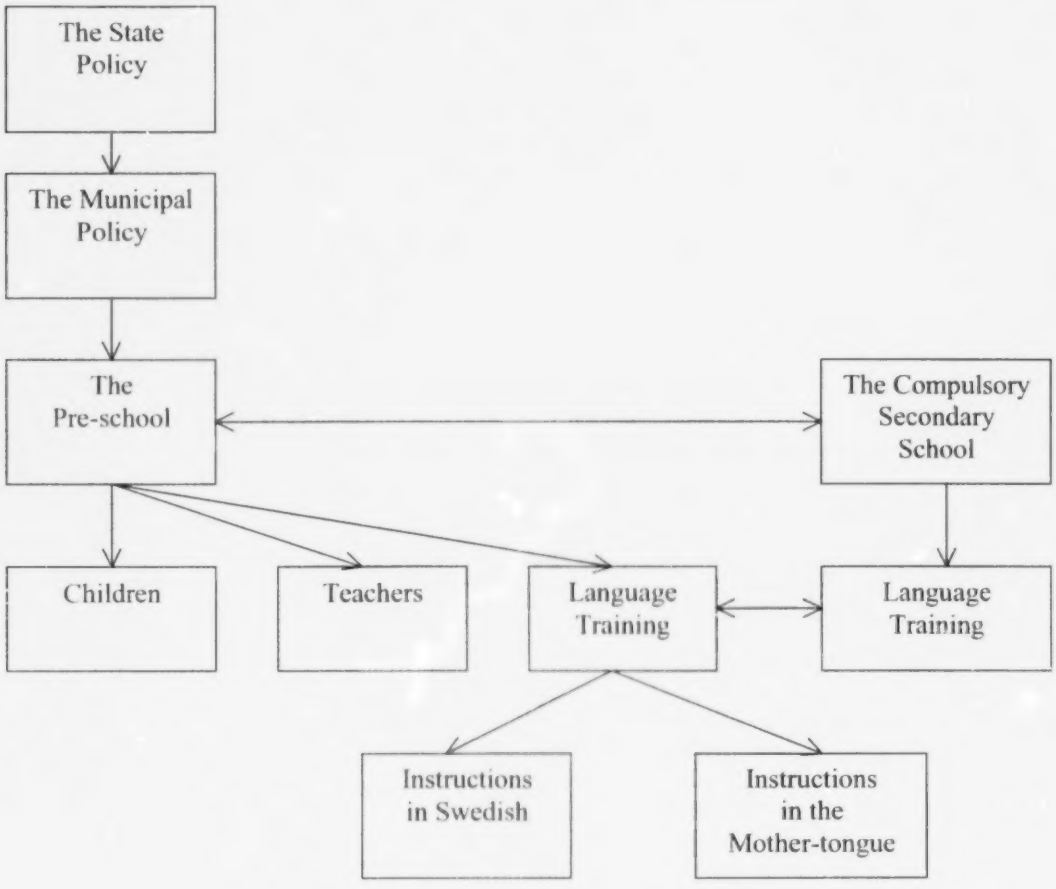
ENCLOSURE I

1.1. The Preliminary Conceptual Framework of My Investigation



1.2. The Preliminary Questions to My Investigation

1. In what form is the training of the mother-tongue and Swedish for immigrant children conducted at the pre-school?
2. Why these exactly forms of giving instructions in the mother-tongue and Swedish have been chosen?
3. What is the proportion of immigrant and Swedish children in a pre-school group?
4. Why this proportion has been chosen?
5. How competent is the pre-school staff in working with immigrant children?
6. Do immigrant children experience any conflicts because of their national background?

ENCLOSURE II

The Scheme of the Preliminary Questions to the Pre-school Staff

1. What kind of a pre-school is this institution?
2. Does the pre-school have a long tradition of working with immigrant children?
3. Does the pre-school have any difficulties in organising the education of immigrant children?
4. How many immigrant children does the pre-school have at the moment?
5. What is the proportion between immigrant and Swedish children in a group?
6. Why has this very proportion been chosen?
7. What are the immigrant children's achievements in learning?
8. How is the educational planning at the pre-school carried out?
9. How are the governmental and the municipal curricula used at the pre-school?
10. How is the training of the mother-tongue organised at the pre-school?
11. How is the training in Swedish for the immigrant children organised?
12. What is the time correlation between the training in the mother-tongue and the instructions in Swedish?
13. How are the individual needs of each immigrant child observed?
14. What is done if an immigrant child falls behind the group in learning?
15. What is the connection between the programme at the pre-school, the pre-school class and the compulsory secondary school?
16. How many teachers are there at the pre-school?
17. What is their education?
18. Are all the teachers at the pre-school prepared to work with immigrant children?
19. What is the supply of the teaching materials for the immigrant children's training?
20. To what degree does the pre-school answer the requirements from the state and the commune in educating immigrant children?
21. How is the communication between the immigrant children and their Swedish peers?
22. Do the immigrant children prefer to communicate with other immigrants or with Swedes?
23. Do the immigrant children experience any complexes because of their national background?
24. What is done by the pre-school staff if an immigrant child starts to be isolated?
25. How is the communication between the immigrant children and their teachers?
26. What is done to make the immigrant children active subjects of the pedagogical process?
27. Do the pre-school teachers learn much from the immigrant children, their customs and culture?
28. Do the teachers at the pre-school read before hand about the immigrant children's countries and cultures to understand the former better?
29. What role do immigrant parents play in the pre-school life?
30. Are the immigrant parents active in the pre-school activities in comparison with Swedish parents?
31. How is the communication between the pre-school staff and the immigrant parents achieved?
32. If the conflicts on the cultural/religious grounds occur, how are they solved?
33. What is done if the immigrant parents do not understand Swedish?

ENCLOSURE III

An Example of Notes I Made During My Interviews and Observations at the Pre-school

March 23th, 2001

Today it has been my second visit to the pre-school. The purpose of it was to talk to the same teacher I had talked to last time. Let us call her Ann. I planned to ask Ann the questions which aroused after I had worked with the material of our first conversation. Mainly, I wanted to clear up how the training of Swedish is organised for immigrant children, what forms of their teaching are implied and how the individual preparedness of each immigrant child in Swedish is observed. I also wanted to know what Ann personally thinks about the absence of the mother-tongue training at the pre-school level.

I came earlier the agreed time. Ann was occupied with children. She ought to work tili the lunch time, when her colleague would come and take her place. I asked for the permission to sit with her and the children, and to observe what they were doing. There were four children at the table who were making a puzzle, each being occupied with a puzzle of their own. This activity did not have an obligatory character. The children could leave it when they felt like that. Actually it was what one boy did shortly afterwards. Without listening to what Ann was saying, and namely, that he should continue with the puzzle, he started to jump around the table. Immediately the second boy joined him, and they started to jump together. To my surprise they were doing it almost silently. The two girls who, as it turned out later, were immigrants of the second generation, continued to be concentrated on their puzzles. Suddenly one girl looked at me, showed me a piece from her puzzle, and said that she did not know where to put it. I advised her to think more. I do not know what was wrong with my answer. I am sure that grammatically it was correct, but the girl looked at me as if I were a hopeless fool and addressed with the same words to Ann. Ann said that the girl should ask one of the boys to help her. I noted immediately that it was an example of how a teacher engages children into communication. However, the girl preferred to ask for help another teacher who was just coming into the room. It was the women who should substitute Ann for the lunch time. I did not see how the episode with the girl and her puzzle finished, as I followed Ann to another room which was less noisy. There I was able to ask her the questions that I had prepared. Ann gave me very detailed answers. I learned from her that watching too much TV has already become a problem for immigrant children, because it causes the mixture of different languages. This aspect was new for me. I had not met anything of the kind in the literature I had read. So I should remember to mention it in my paper. Other items that I should write about are noted briefly in the exercise-book I used during the interview. Among them special attention should be paid to the description of forms of training Swedish applied at the pre-school. Ann talked about many of them. She showed me some game sets that were aimed to help children in the development of their Swedish. Particularly I liked a little red sack with tiny cards inside, on which different objects from our everyday reality were depicted. As I was explained, this game is played the following way: children gather around the teacher and in turn take cards out of the sack. The task is to name the object that they can see on the picture. One can imagine how fascinating this game is for children! At the same time its learning value is obvious, especially for immigrant children, who might have a narrow active vocabulary in Swedish. I hope I shall have enough space in my paper to focus on that. The next visit to the pre-school I plan on the 27th of March. Questions to it I shall prepare later, after working with the already collected material.

ENCLOSURE IV

The Scheme of the Preliminary Questions to the Immigrant Parents Whose Children Attend the Pre-school

1. Why have you sent your child to the pre-school?
2. Why this particular pre-school has been chosen?
3. How do people refer about this pre-school?/ Does the pre-school have a good reputation in the district?
4. Do you like how your child is treated at the pre-school?
5. Does your child have any difficulties at the pre-school because of his national/religious background?
6. Has your child ever had any conflicts at the pre-school because of his national/religious background?
7. Does your child like to attend the pre-school?
8. Has he ever made scenes/ started to cry before going to the pre-school?
9. Did your child know any Swedish when he started at the pre-school?
10. How do you evaluate his level of knowing Swedish now?
11. What language do you mainly speak at home with your child?
12. Were you instructed that the mother-tongue plays a very important role in the development of your child?
13. What do you do to develop your child's knowledge of the mother-tongue?
14. Do you do anything to develop your child's knowledge of Swedish?
15. Do you let your child watch TV often? Why?
16. What do you know about your child's communication at the pre-school?
17. Does he have many friends among Swedes there?
18. Does he experience problems in obtaining contacts with peers?
19. What do you think about the communication between the pre-school personnel and parents?
20. Do you like the way the pre-school personnel treats you?
21. Have you ever had any conflicts with the pre-school personnel?
22. Do you understand everything from what they say to you in Swedish?
23. Do you take part in the pre-school activities?
24. Do you think the pre-school staff is competent in work?